

# **UNIT COHESION**

**“THE BONDING TOGETHER OF SOLDIERS  
AND THEIR LEADERS IN SUCH A WAY AS  
TO  
DEVELOP AND SUSTAIN THEIR  
COMMITMENT  
TO THE UNIT AND THEIR RESOLVE TO  
ACOMPLISH THE MISSION.”**

# BONDING

THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRONG INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AMONG SOLDIERS AND BETWEEN THEM AND THEIR LEADERS. A KEY CHARACTERISTIC OF A TRULY COHESIVE UNIT IS THAT BONDING OCCURS IN TWO DIRECTIONS, HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL.

HORIZONTAL BONDING: “BONDING WHICH IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUTUAL TRUST AND RESPECT BETWEEN SOLDIERS.”

VERTICAL BONDING: “THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUTUAL TRUST AND RESPECT BETWEEN SOLDIERS AND THEIR IMMEDIATE LEADERS, AND BETWEEN LEADERS AT VARIOUS LEVELS WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION.”

# **BONDING (Cont.)**

## **COMMITMENT**

**“DEDICATION NOT ONLY TO THE UNIT AND WHAT IT REPRESENTS, BUT TO THE VALUES AND GOALS OF THE NATION AS WELL.”**

## **RESOLVE**

**“THE SHARED DETERMINATION OF SOLDIERS AND THEIR LEADERS TO WORK INTERDEPENDENTLY AND ACCOMPLISH THE MISSION, AND TO SUSTAIN THIS CAPABILITY OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME.”**

# **STAGES OF SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT**

## **STAGE 1: THE FORMATION STAGE (DEPENDENT)**

**THE TIME OF TRANSITION FROM BEING AN  
INDIVIDUAL TO BECOMING PART OF A TEAM.  
THE FORMATION STAGE HAS TWO STEPS:**

**RECEPTION STEP: THE INTRODUCTION TO  
THE UNIT. IN A MILITARY UNIT IT BEGINS  
WITH A WELCOME LETTER.**

**ORIENTATION STEP: THE PERIOD DURING  
WHICH UNIT STANDARDS AND VALUES, GOALS  
AND MISSIONS, AND THE UNIT'S HISTORY AND  
HERITAGE IS LEARNED. THIS IS WHEN THE  
SOLDIER BEGINS TO LEARN WHAT IS  
EXPECTED OF HIM/HER.**

# **STAGES OF SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT** **(Cont)**

**STAGE 2: ENRICHMENT STAGE (INDEPENDENT) THE TIME DURING WHICH A TEAM PROGRESSES FROM ONE INTRA-TEAM CONFLICT TO ONE CHARACTERIZED BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF TEAM COHESION. THE ENRICHMENT STAGE HAS TWO STEPS:**

**STEP 1: TRANSITION OF A NEW MEMBER TO AN INDEPENDENT STATE. THIS STEP BUILDS UPON THE FORMATION STAGE.**

**STEP 2: TRANSITION OF THE INDEPENDENT MEMBER TO AN INTERDEPENDENT MEMBER OF THE TEAM.**

**STAGE 3 SUSTAINMENT STAGE  
(INTERDEPENDENT): THIS STAGE IS  
CHARACTERIZED BY ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE**

## IN-CLASS EXERCISE B

**Question 1: Is there a difference between cohesion at the platoon level and cohesion at the company or staff section level? Use the following table format to present your response.**

Type of Organization	PLATOON	COMPANY
Cohesive Relationships	Interpersonal Relationships	Inter-organizational Relationships (cannot exist without cohesive platoons)
Description of Bonding	<p>Bonding is based on mutual trust and respect.</p> <p><u>Vertical Bonding</u>: Extends from the individual soldier to the platoon leader. Achieves a bond based on mutual trust and respect.</p> <p><u>Horizontal Bonding</u>: There is a</p>	<p>Bonding occurs between key unit leaders and between platoons. Platoons and key leaders trust and respect each other.</p> <p><u>Vertical Bonding</u>: Bonding extends from the individual platoons to the company leadership.</p> <p><u>Horizontal bonding</u>: Bonding occurs between similar organizations such as between platoons or sections.</p>
Commitment	mutual assurance that other	Commitment is to the company mission.
Resolve	<p>members of the platoon are competent (tactically and technically), reliable, and can be trusted to perform well.</p> <p>Determination to accomplish the platoon mission.</p>	<p>Determination to accomplish the company mission.</p>

IN-CLASS EXERCISE B SOLUTION

**Commitment to the platoon mission.**

## **IN-CLASS EXERCISE B (SOLUTION)** **(Cont.)**

**Question 2: What creates the best conditions for the development of a cohesive platoon and company?**  
**Platoon and company level: Tough, challenging training which requires both individuals and subordinate units to rely on each other to accomplish the mission creates the best conditions for the growth of cohesion.**

# **FACTORS OF UNIT COHESION**

- **LEADERSHIP**
- **GROUP (UNIT) CHARACTERISTICS**
- **INDIVIDUALS IN THE UNIT**
- **UNIT SOCIALIZATION**
- **UNIT AND INDIVIDUAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**
- **UNIT ACTIVITIES**
- **UNIT IDENTIFICATION AND HISTORY**



# ASSESSMENT OF UNIT COHESION

**STEP 1. RECOGNIZING (OBSERVING) AND RECOGNIZING THE PERFORMANCE OF SUBORDINATE UNIT AND INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE.**

**STEP 2. CLASSIFYING THE PERFORMANCE IN TERMS OF THE FACTOR AREAS OF UNIT COHESION.**

**STEP 3. EVALUATING OR RATING THE ACTIONS OF SUBORDINATE UNIT AND INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE IN TERMS OF THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNIT COHESION.**

## **SITUATION 1**

**2D SQD, 2D PLT DESIGNED A PLT COAT OF ARMS. THE PLT HAD T-SHIRTS MADE AND THE ENTIRE PLT WORE THE T-SHIRT FOR PT.**

# STEPS TO IMPROVE UNIT COHESION:

## (Develop a Plan)

- 1. IDENTIFY THE SPECIFIC FACTOR AREAS OF UNIT COHESION WHICH NEED IMPROVEMENT IN YOUR UNIT.**
- 2. ESTABLISH CLEAR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR EACH FACTOR AREA WHICH YOU WANT TO INFLUENCE.**
- 3. BRIEF YOUR COMMANDER OR SUPERVISOR ON YOUR FINDINGS, YOUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AND SEEK HIS/HER INPUT.**

# STEPS TO IMPROVE UNIT COHESION (Cont.): (Develop a Plan)

- 4. BRIEF YOUR SUBORDINATE LEADERS ON YOUR FINDINGS, YOUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES, SEEK THEIR INPUT, AND INVOLVE THEM IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN TO IMPROVE UNIT COHESION.**
- 5. CONDUCT AN AFTER ACTION REVIEW OF THE EXECUTION OF YOUR PLAN AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS AS NECESSARY.**